

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6691

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

UNCLAS MEXICO 2280

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PBOR PROP PN PQ

SUBJECT: PANAMANIAN PRESS CONFERENCE ON CANAL NEGOTIATIONS
AND RELATED SUBJECTS.

REF: CARACAS 2071

1. PANAMANIAN EMILIA AROSEMENA (AMB TO MEXICO), JULIO YAU
(FONMIN COUNSELOR FOR CANAL NEGOTIATIONS), AND MARIO VELAZQUEZ
(GOP DIR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS) GAVE A JOINT PRESS IN MEXICO
MARCH 12.

2. YAU, PRINCIPAL SPOKESMAN AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE,
COMMENTED ON THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS AS FOLLOWS: "WE REJECT
(THE PROPOSITION) THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS ANY INTEREST
OR CONDITION TO IMPOSE ON PANAMA IN THE NEGOTIATIONS ON A NEW
TREATY, AND THOSE THAT MIGHT BE INCLUDED SHOULD BE TRANSITORY
AND NOT IN PERPETUITY AS HAS BEEN DONE AND IS BEING ATTEMPTED."
HE PROCLAIMED THAT IN THE CANAL ZONE THERE IS NOT AND
CANNOT BE ANY NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY BUT THAT OF PANAMA. YAU
ALSO ASSERTED THAT PANAMA'S POSITION IS IRREDUCIBLE AND THAT
THE ONLY POSSIBLE SOLUTION IS IMMEDIATE REVERSION OF SOVEREIGNTY
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OVER THE CANAL ZONE. (NOTE: INCONSISTENT STATEMENTS ON SOVEREIGNTY

APPEAR IN SAME PRESS REPORT.) THE GOP IS SEEKING SUPPORT THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA AND THE REST OF THE THIRD WORLD. YAU NOTED THAT MEXICO, THE DAKER CONFERENCE ON COMMODITIES, AND THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF NORTH AMERICA HAVE ALL EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S POSITION. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY 37 US SENATORS WILL CAUSE THE US EMBARRASSMENT AND THAT GENERAL OMAR TORRIJOS WILL CONSULT THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE DIRECTLY ON THE CANAL QUESTION WITHIN A FEW MONTHS.

3. VELAZQUEZ ANNOUNCED THE PRESIDENTS OF VENEZUELA, COLOMBIA AND COSTA RICA WILL MEET WITH HEAD OF STATE GEN. TORRIJO IN PANAMA MARCH 23 AND 24 TO REITERATE THEIR SUPPORT FOR PANAMA AND TO DISCUSS MATTERS WHICH AFFECT THEIR NATIONS AND ARE OF GENERAL INTEREST IN LATIN AMERICA. HE ADDED THAT THE SIGNING OF THE DECLARATION OF PANAMA ON THE 24TH WILL BE BROADCAST BY SATELLITE THROUGHOUT LAIN AMERICA.

4. ALTHOUGH COLOMBIAN AMB ALVARO URIBE ALSO ATTENDED THE PRESS CONFERENCE, THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT HE OR AMB AROSEMENA SPOKE.

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